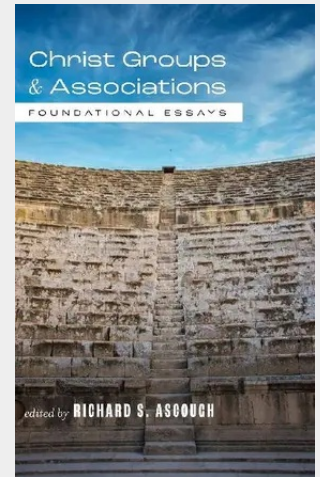


Christ Groups and Associations

Foundational Essays

The use of voluntary associations as a way to begin understanding Christ groups has become accepted practice in much of modern New Testament scholarship. This consensus has been decades in the making, building on work from the previous century. Easy access to influential works in this field enables students and scholars to expand our horizons for studying Christian origins. The chapters in this volume represent some of the key figures and their arguments across three major periods of interest in the development of using associations as a model for understanding early Christ groups. A new introduction orients the reader to the important contributions of each essay and to where the essays fit within broader attempts at reconstructing the development of Christianity. While much work remains in this field, *Christ Groups and Associations* serves to demonstrate the breadth of existing research and past discoveries on Christ groups enmeshed within the Greco-Roman cultural and social milieu and also the communal patterns that preceded and surrounded such groups. Modern scholars can build on these essays to join in the lively debate about the relevance of associations for understanding the claims and practices of the earliest Christ groups.

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